

## RAJYA SABHA

### List of Questions for WRITTEN ANSWERS

*to be asked at a sitting of the Rajya Sabha to be held on  
Thursday, the December 11, 2003/Agrahayana 20, 1925 (Saka)*

(Ministries: Prime Minister; Agro and Rural Industries; Atomic Energy;  
Communications and Information Technology; Consumer Affairs, Food  
and Public Distribution; Development of North Eastern Region;  
Disinvestment; External Affairs; Labour; Planning;  
Road Transport and Highways; Small Scale  
Industries; Space; Statistics and  
Programme Implementation)

Total number of questions—155

#### Funds under PMRY

937. SHRI P.K. MAHESHWARI: Will the Minister of AGRO AND RURAL INDUSTRIES be pleased to state:

- (a) the details of funds released to Madhya Pradesh under PMRY during the last three years;
- (b) the number of the villages benefited as a result thereof; and
- (c) the funds proposed during the year 2003-04?

#### Targets under PMRY

938. DR. DASARI NARAYANA RAO: Will the Minister of AGRO AND RURAL INDUSTRIES be pleased to state:

- (a) what were the annual targets fixed for Andhra Pradesh and Tamil Nadu under PMRY during the last four years, year-wise;
- (b) whether the targets were achieved in both the States during the said period;
- (c) if not, the reasons therefor; and

(d) what remedial measures Government have taken in this regard?

#### Foreign market for Khadi products

939. PROF. M. SANKARALINGAM: Will the Minister of AGRO AND RURAL INDUSTRIES be pleased to state:

- (a) whether it is a fact that India has taken steps to create a market for superior Khadi products in neighbouring countries like Sri Lanka, Pakistan and other SAARC countries;
- (b) if so, the details thereof; and
- (c) the efforts made by Government to familiarise Khadi in the country during the past four years?

#### Transfer of Group 'D' employees of Atomic Energy Education Society of Hyderabad

940. SHRI NANDI YELLAIAH: Will the PRIME MINISTER be pleased to state:

- (a) whether class IV (Group D) employees of Atomic Energy Education

Society working at Hyderabad were transferred to Bihar and Mumbai on the grounds of work shrinkage;

(b) if so, whether Atomic Energy Education Society passed an order stating "all the Group 'D' employees should be placed at the service of nuclear Fuel complex, Hyderabad and they would be paid by the Atomic Energy Society";

(c) if so, the reasons and circumstances leading to violation of the above orders; and

(d) the reasons for not issuing orders to N.F.C. Hyderabad, to absorb the surplus AEES Group 'D' instead of recruiting from outside?

#### **Safety measures in nuclear plants**

†941. SHRI JANESHWAR MISHRA: Will the PRIME MINISTER be pleased to state:

(a) whether it is a fact that adequate safety measures are not available in most of the nuclear plants in the country;

(b) whether it is also a fact that radiation related accidents have become a frequent phenomenon in all the nuclear plants; and

(c) if so, the details of such accidents during the last five years, plant-wise and year-wise?

#### **Additional spectrum for telecom service providers**

942. SHRI R.K. ANAND: Will the Minister of COMMUNICATIONS AND INFORMATION TECHNOLOGY be pleased to state the details of the modalities to make 25 Mhz additional spectrum for telecom service providers over the next three years with the cost of the service?

#### **WLL and fixed line licenses**

943. SHRI ABANI ROY: Will the Minister of COMMUNICATIONS AND INFORMATION TECHNOLOGY be pleased to state:

(a) the companies which have applied for WLL and fixed line licenses during the last one year;

(b) how much performance bank guarantee and entry fee have been deposited by these companies with Government, company-wise; and

(c) whether these companies are likely to offer new services to the customers and if so, the details thereof, company-wise?

#### **Escort service**

944. SHRI RAMA MUNI REDDY SIRIGIREDDY: Will the Minister of COMMUNICATIONS AND INFORMATION TECHNOLOGY be pleased to state:

(a) whether it is a fact that Government propose to start an 'Escort Service' which would provide information on foreign countries visa rules, etc. to IT professionals working abroad; and

(b) if so, the details thereof?

#### **Waiting list of telephone connections in Orissa**

945. SHRI SURENDRA LATH: Will the Minister of COMMUNICATIONS AND INFORMATION TECHNOLOGY be pleased to state:

(a) the number of people waiting for telephone connections in each district in Orissa;

(b) the steps taken to clear the waiting list; and

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†Original notice of the question received in Hindi

(c) by when, telephone would be sanctioned in each district on demand?

#### **Telephone Adalats**

946. SHRI DWIJENDRA NATH SHARMAH: Will the Minister of COMMUNICATIONS AND INFORMATION TECHNOLOGY be pleased to state:

(a) the details of the Telephone Adalats organized in each districts of Assam during the last three years; and

(b) the number of cases referred to these Adalats and disposed of during this period, district-wise?

#### **Mobile services**

947. SHRI LALIT SURI: Will the Minister of COMMUNICATIONS AND INFORMATION TECHNOLOGY be pleased to state:

(a) the States where mobile telephones have so far, been introduced during the year 2003;

(b) whether some specific areas in certain States have been kept out of the mobile technology on security grounds, if so, the details thereof;

(c) the States where mobile telephones have not been introduced so far; and

(d) by when, the entire country is proposed to be covered by mobile technology?

#### **Mobile service in Madhya Pradesh**

948. SHRI P.K. MAHESHWARI: Will the Minister of COMMUNICATIONS AND INFORMATION TECHNOLOGY be pleased to state:

(a) the number of districts in Madhya Pradesh where mobile service is available at present;

(b) the number of districts in the State where this service has not been launched; and

(c) by when, this service would be provided in the remaining districts of the State?

#### **Telephone to villages**

949. SHRI SURENDRA LATH: Will the Minister of COMMUNICATIONS AND INFORMATION TECHNOLOGY be pleased to state:

(a) whether Government have a proposal to provide telephone to all the revenue villages in the country;

(b) whether any target has been fixed for the purpose; and

(c) what progress has been made in that regard, State-wise?

#### **WLL technology in rural and semi-urban areas**

950. SHRI R.S. GAVAI: Will the Minister of COMMUNICATIONS AND INFORMATION TECHNOLOGY be pleased to refer to answer to Unstarred Question 1187 given in Rajya Sabha on 31st July 2003 and state:

(a) whether Government have formulated strategy to introduce WLL technology in rural and semi-urban areas of the country;

(b) if so, the details thereof; and

(c) if not, the reasons therefor?

### **Telephone exchanges in Uttaranchal**

951. SHRI HARISH RAWAT: Will the Minister of COMMUNICATIONS AND INFORMATION TECHNOLOGY be pleased to state:

(a) the number of telephone exchanges operating in Uttaranchal at present, district-wise; and

(b) the number of new telephone exchanges likely to be set up during the current financial year in the State, district-wise?

### **Call rates of Reliance WLL mobile services**

†952. DR. PRABHA THAKUR: Will the Minister of COMMUNICATIONS AND INFORMATION TECHNOLOGY be pleased to state:

(a) whether call rates of WLL mobile services of reliance are quite low *vis-a-vis* call rates of other cellular phones; and

(b) the details in terms of percentage to the extent these charges are less?

### **Village Public Telephones**

953. DR. DASARI NARAYANA RAO: Will the Minister of COMMUNICATIONS AND INFORMATION TECHNOLOGY be pleased to state:

(a) whether it is a fact that there has been a consistent shortfall in achievement of the targets for Village Public Telephones (VPTs) in the country;

(b) if so, the reasons therefor;

(c) if answer to part (a) above be in negative, the State and Union Territory-

wise targets of VPTs during the last five years, year-wise and the status of achievement thereof; and

(d) the remedial measures Government propose to take in this regard?

### **Quality of internet services**

954. SHRI SATISH PRADHAN: Will the Minister of COMMUNICATIONS AND INFORMATION TECHNOLOGY be pleased to state:

(a) whether it is a fact that the quality of internet services being provided by BSNL, MTNL, VSNL are not meeting TRAI's quality norms;

(b) if so, the reasons therefor; and

(c) the steps taken or proposed to be taken for improvement in the quality of internet services?

### **Postal services in U.P.**

†955. DR. AKHTAR HASAN RIZVI: Will the Minister of COMMUNICATIONS AND INFORMATION TECHNOLOGY be pleased to state:

(a) the number of new post offices, speed post counters proposed to be set up during the current financial year in the rural areas of Uttar Pradesh; and

(b) the steps Government have taken to improve postal services in the rural areas?

### **Postal scam in Bihar**

956. SHRI SATISH PRADHAN: Will the Minister of COMMUNICATIONS AND INFORMATION TECHNOLOGY be pleased to state:

(a) whether it is a fact that the CBI has busted recently a sensational postal scam

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†Original notice of the question received in Hindi

in Bihar, in which men behind dubious firms teamed up with two senior officials to dupe people and cause huge losses to the Department of Posts;

(b) if so, the details thereof; and

(c) what corrective steps have been taken or proposed to be taken in this regard?

#### **Public awareness campaign through IT visits**

†957. SHRIMATI KUM KUM RAI: Will the Minister of COMMUNICATIONS AND INFORMATION TECHNOLOGY be pleased to state:

(a) whether it is a fact that Government propose to start public awareness campaign through information technology visits;

(b) if so, the details thereof; and

(c) whether it would be successful with the present rate of literacy among the public?

#### **Extension of green card facilities**

958. DR. AKHILESH DAS: Will the Minister of COMMUNICATIONS AND INFORMATION TECHNOLOGY be pleased to state:

(a) whether Government have requested the UK, the US and the European Union countries to extend green card facilities to Indian IT professionals by the end of the year 2004;

(b) if so, what is the response of each of these countries; and

(c) the number of requests from Indian professionals and entrepreneurs for such green cards for each country of destination pending with Government as on April, 2003 and how many of them have been issued such cards?

#### **Complaints of sexual harassment**

959. SHRI JIBON ROY: Will the Minister of COMMUNICATIONS AND INFORMATION TECHNOLOGY be pleased to state:

(a) whether the General Manager of BSNL, Uttar Kannad has received any complaints for sexual harassment against personnel of B.S.N.L. office at Joida; and

(b) if so, what action has been taken against the offenders?

#### **Uniform licensing regime for mobile services**

960. SHRI JANARDHANA POOJARY: Will the Minister of COMMUNICATIONS AND INFORMATION TECHNOLOGY be pleased to state:

(a) whether it is a fact that Government have introduced a uniform licensing regime for the mobile telephone services;

(b) if so, what are the details thereof and reaction of the service providers thereto; and

(c) the benefits likely to accrue to the users?

#### **Base-stations for cellular phones**

961. SHRI MATILAL SARKAR: Will the Minister of COMMUNICATIONS AND INFORMATION TECHNOLOGY be pleased to state:

(a) the number of mobile phones and the States selected for base-stations for the purpose of introduction of cellular phones in different States of the North-Eastern Region;

(b) the criteria and policy for determining the number of mobile phones and selecting base-stations and the policy thereof;

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†Original notice of the question received in Hindi

(c) whether the State Governments were taken into confidence while determining the criteria and the base-stations; and

(d) if not, whether the policy would be reviewed before execution?

**Mobile phone services in N.E. Region**

962. DR. KARAN SINGH: Will the Minister of COMMUNICATIONS AND INFORMATION TECHNOLOGY be pleased to state:

(a) whether Government have decided to extend mobile phone services to the entire North-Eastern Region and other border areas by the end of the year 2003;

(b) if so, the areas not covered by such services in the beginning of the year, and the progress so far, made in covering these areas by such services, indicating the operators who have undertaken to provide such services in the respective areas and the terms of the undertakings; and

(c) the details of the projects to cover the rest of the NE Region?

**Mobile phone services in Jammu and Kashmir**

†963. DR. AKHTAR HASAN RIZVI: Will the Minister of COMMUNICATIONS AND INFORMATION TECHNOLOGY be pleased to state:

(a) whether Government have launched mobile phone services in Jammu and Kashmir;

(b) if so, the details thereof;

(c) the number of mobile connections issued, so far; and

(d) whether non-governmental companies are also providing mobile phone connections in the State?

**Fixation of tariff for landline services**

964. SHRI JANARDHANA POOJARY: Will the Minister of COMMUNICATIONS AND INFORMATION TECHNOLOGY be pleased to state:

(a) whether it is a fact that Government have given a free hand to the landline telephone operators to fix tariff for their services; and

(b) if so, the details thereof?

**Penalties for not fulfilling rural commitments**

965. SHRI R.S. GAVAI: Will the Minister of COMMUNICATIONS AND INFORMATION TECHNOLOGY be pleased to state:

(a) whether Government propose to levy access deficit charges and other penalties on the private service providers who are not fulfilling rural commitments;

(b) if so, the details thereof;

(c) if not, the reasons therefor; and

(d) the other measures Government propose to take against defaulters in this regard?

**Sub standard telephone services**

†966. SHRIMATI KAMLA MANHAR:  
SHRI BALKAVI BAIRAGI:

Will the Minister of COMMUNICATIONS AND INFORMATION TECHNOLOGY be pleased to state:

(a) whether it is a fact that according to the recent survey of TRAI, the services of

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†Original notice of the question received in Hindi.

AIRTEL, HUTCH, RPG including BSNL and MTNL are sub standard;

(b) whether it is also a fact that the major grievance of the consumers have been regarding their network and billing; and

(c) if so, the action TRAI proposes to take against these operators?

#### **WLL Limited mobile services**

967. SHRIMATI KAMLA  
MANHAR:  
SHRI ABANI ROY:

Will the Minister of COMMUNICATIONS AND INFORMATION TECHNOLOGY be pleased to state:

(a) whether Government have constituted a Task Force of Technical Experts from IITs, CSIR, TCIL and others to ensure that WLL limited mobile services do not suffer due to unnecessary representations by the Cellular Operators Association of India; and

(b) if so, the details of the outcome of the Task Force constituted to look into the problems of WLL vs GSM?

#### **Meghadoot cards**

†968. SHRI BALKAVI BAIRAGI:  
SHRIMATI KAMLA  
MANHAR:

Will the Minister of COMMUNICATIONS AND INFORMATION TECHNOLOGY be pleased to state:

(a) the objectives of issuing the meghadoot cards by the postal department together with the arrangements made for the purpose;

(b) the action taken on the complaints received regarding returning the twenty five paise post cards with the remark "under stamped"; and

(c) the details of the action taken against the guilty employees and the steps likely to be taken for redressal of the grievances?

#### **Software exports**

969. SHRI RAMA MUNI REDDY SIRIGIREDDY: Will the Minister of COMMUNICATIONS AND INFORMATION TECHNOLOGY be pleased to state:

(a) the software and hardware exports by India to various countries during the last five years, year-wise and country-wise; and

(b) the revenue earned in terms of dollars during the above period year-wise and country-wise?

#### **Increase in STD/ISD rates**

970. SHRI RAJU PARMAR:  
SHRI RUMANDLA  
RAAMACHANDRAYYA:

Will the Minister of COMMUNICATIONS AND INFORMATION TECHNOLOGY be pleased to state:

(a) whether STD/ISD rates for cell and WLL service providers have been increased drastically by the Telecom Regulatory Authority of India;

(b) if so, what are the rates of STD/ISD from cell, cell to WLL and cell to landline and *vice versa*; and

(c) the likely revenue to be earned on account of this increase?

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†Original notice of the question received in Hindi.

### **Withdrawal of 'Rural' status**

971. SHRIMATI BIMBA RAIKAR: Will the Minister of COMMUNICATIONS AND INFORMATION TECHNOLOGY be pleased to state:

(a) whether it is a fact that Telecom Department has withdrawn 'Rural' status for many suburban pockets solely on the basis of census figures of 2001;

(b) whether these pockets/villages still retain the rural characteristics and are still classified as 'Rural' in State revenue records; and

(c) what other criteria were considered for upgradation of 'Rural' areas apart from demographic density as recorded by 2001 census?

### **Post Offices in rural areas**

972. SHRI ABU ASIM AZMI: Will the Minister of COMMUNICATIONS AND INFORMATION TECHNOLOGY be pleased to state:

(a) the number of Post Offices in the rural areas as on the 1st April, 2003, State-wise, and the average population covered by a Post Office; and

(b) the number of post offices having long distance telephone and telegraph and fax facilities?

### **Procurement of equipments and network by BSNL**

973. SHRI K.B. KRISHNA MURTHY: Will the Minister of COMMUNICATIONS AND INFORMATION TECHNOLOGY be pleased to state:

(a) whether Bharat Sanchar Nigam Limited had initiated a process of limited tender a year ago for procurement of equipments and network for 2.5 million

lines, because of the urgency of the requirement;

(b) whether one of the bidders Motoral had quoted rates 50% higher than the comparable market rates;

(c) whether despite passage of a year in the process, the BSNL has completed the process of procurement and installation; and

(d) if not, whether an open tender would have ensured lower bids?

### **Unified license policy**

974. SHRI NILOTPAL BASU: Will the Minister of COMMUNICATIONS AND INFORMATION TECHNOLOGY be pleased to state:

(a) whether the new 'unified license' policy introduced by Government is linked to spectrum availability and a transparent spectrum allocation policy;

(b) if so, the details thereof; and

(c) if not, the reasons therefor?

### **Internet exchanges**

975. SHRI EDUARDO FALEIRO: Will the Minister of COMMUNICATIONS AND INFORMATION TECHNOLOGY be pleased to state:

(a) the number of internet exchanges in the country;

(b) what steps are being taken by Government to facilitate setting up of the same; and

(c) the extent of international bandwidth available to international users within the country?

**Promotion of free/libre and open source software**

976. SHRI EDUARDO FALEIRO: Will the Minister of COMMUNICATIONS AND INFORMATION TECHNOLOGY be pleased to state:

(a) what steps have been taken since the announcement of the Linux India Initiative by Government on the issue of promoting free/libre and open source software within the country;

(b) the level of usage of FLOSS products in Government and semi-Government organizations; and

(c) whether the research benefits of publicly-funded computing institutions would be made sharable to all, by placing the same under the General Public Licence (GPL) or similar licences that do not restrict sharing of knowledge due to copyright restrictions?

**Availability of spectrum to operators**

977. SHRI NILOTPAL BASU: Will the Minister of COMMUNICATIONS AND INFORMATION TECHNOLOGY be pleased to state:

(a) whether there has been any exercise by Government or the TRAI, taking into account the commercial size of the Indian Telecom and IT market, for valuation of spectrum which could be made available to operators; and

(b) if so, the details thereof; if not, the reasons therefor?

**Deadline for providing villages telephones**

†978. SHRI MOTILAL VORA: Will the Minister of COMMUNICATIONS AND INFORMATION TECHNOLOGY be pleased to state:

(a) whether it is a fact that December, 2002 was fixed as deadline by Government to achieve the target for providing telephones in all the villages of the country;

(b) whether it is also a fact that a condition to this effect was placed while giving licence for the telecom circle to the operators that the private operators would cover 60,000 villages;

(c) whether it is also a fact that private companies have been violating the instructions issued by Government time to time with regard to laying of telephone cables in the villages; and

(d) if so, what action has been taken by Government to see that the private operators follow the instructions?

**Security threat due to expansion of communication network**

979. SHRI K. KALAVENKATA RAO:  
SHRI C. RAMA-CHANDRAIAH:  
SHRI ABANI ROY:

Will the Minister of COMMUNICATIONS AND INFORMATION TECHNOLOGY be pleased to state:

(a) whether the expanding communication networks with a range of handsets, ATMs, wireless sets and other electronic devices has made security a concern for everyone;

(b) whether the more wireless and other networks expand, the greater is the threat to humanize, according to security experts who have concluded a conference in New Delhi in August, 2003; and

(c) if so, the steps Government propose to take in this regard so that threat to life on account of wireless handsets is minimal?

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†Original notice of the question received in Hindi.

### **Loss due to internet**

†980. SHRI DATTA MEGHE: Will the Minister of COMMUNICATIONS AND INFORMATION TECHNOLOGY be pleased to state:

(a) whether Government's attention has been drawn to the press reports captioned, "Internet se desh ko 2000 crore rupaye ka nuksan";

(b) if so, whether it is a fact that the internet services lack in the indicating words of 'Dot in' which is to be suffixed after the name of websites resulting in the loss to the tune of Rs. 2000 crore every year;

(c) if so, the details thereof; and

(d) whether any step has been taken to streamline and control the situation?

### **BSNL's promotional schemes for mobile subscribers**

981. SHRI KALRAJ MISHRA: Will the Minister of COMMUNICATIONS AND INFORMATION TECHNOLOGY be pleased to state:

(a) whether the Bharat Sanchar Nigam Limited (BSNL) has lately launched any new promotional schemes for its mobile subscribers to provide greater mobility and higher talk time;

(b) if so, the details thereof; and

(c) the manner in which other mobile phone operators and consumer public have reacted and responded to it?

### **Post office in Krishna Nagar**

982. SHRI C. RAMA-CHANDRAIAH: Will the Minister of COMMUNICATIONS AND INFORMATION TECHNOLOGY be

pleased to refer to answer to Unstarred Question 1210 given in the Rajya Sabha on the 31st July, 2003 and state:

(a) whether the new departmental building of Krishna Nagar Post Office is far away from Krishna Nagar and is very inconvenient for the residents of Krishna Nagar;

(b) whether the Sub-Post Office of Krishna Nagar, which was temporarily shifted, has not been opened so far causing great inconvenience to the people; and

(c) by when a Post Office would be opened in Krishna Nagar?

### **Monthly sugar quota**

983. SHRI ABANI ROY:  
SHRIMATI KAMLA  
MANHAR:

Will the Minister of CONSUMER AFFAIRS, FOOD AND PUBLIC DISTRIBUTION be pleased to state:

(a) whether Government have decided to reduce the monthly sugar quota *w.e.f.* August, 2003;

(b) whether such a decision has created an artificial shortage and increased the prices of sugar to Rs. 250 per quintal;

(c) if so, the details thereof; and

(d) whether Government propose to bring down the prices of sugar in the open market immediately and if not, the reasons therefor?

### **Availability of rail rakes**

984. SHRI EKANATH K. THAKUR: Will the Minister of CONSUMER AFFAIRS, FOOD AND PUBLIC DISTRIBUTION be pleased to state:

(a) whether it is a fact that India's large wheat stocks, which many countries are

†Original notice of the question received in Hindi.

prepared to buy, have failed to make any large impact on the global trade due to shortage of rail rakes; and

(b) if so, the steps Government propose to take for easy availability of rail rakes?

#### **Consumer Protection Act**

985. SHRI P. PRABHAKAR REDDY: Will the Minister of CONSUMER AFFAIRS, FOOD AND PUBLIC DISTRIBUTION be pleased to state:

(a) the objectives of the Consumer Protection Act;

(b) whether Government have carried any review to ascertain as to how the objectives of the Act have been achieved;

(c) if so, the results of the review; and

(d) if not, whether Government would consider constitution of a Review Committee to plug the loopholes of the Act and mend some of its grey areas?

#### **Food stock**

986. SHRI R.P. GOENKA: Will the Minister of CONSUMER AFFAIRS, FOOD AND PUBLIC DISTRIBUTION be pleased to state:

(a) whether it is a fact that the public food stock has declined drastically in the last few months;

(b) if so, the details of the current level; and

(c) whether Government have decided on the optimum stock the FCI should hold as buffer to meet eventualities like drought?

#### **BIS specifications for electric bulbs**

987. SHRI KALRAJ MISHRA: Will the Minister of CONSUMER AFFAIRS, FOOD AND PUBLIC DISTRIBUTION be pleased to state:

(a) whether following the controversy about the soft drinks and bottled water following or not following ELL safety norms and presence of pesticides therein, another NGO, namely—Consumer Education and Research Society has come up with a study revealing that most of the electric bulbs do not confirm the BIS specifications;

(b) if so, what are the BIS specifications laid down for bulbs in respect of longevity and life of a standard bulb, and how far each of the Indian bulb product falls short of the standard; and

(c) Government's reaction thereto?

#### **F.C.I. godowns in Andhra Pradesh**

988. SHRI NANDI YELLAIAH: Will the Minister of CONSUMER AFFAIRS, FOOD AND PUBLIC DISTRIBUTION be pleased to state:

(a) the details of the godowns indicating their maximum storing capacities under F.C.I. in Andhra Pradesh with locations thereof;

(b) the details of the godowns in the State under private parties, with locations thereof;

(c) the rules, regulations, responsibilities etc. pertaining to maintenance of these godowns by the private parties;

(d) the conditions and financial assistance, if any, under which the task of construction of godowns and their maintenance is handed over to private parties; and

(e) the details of various advantages gained by F.C.I. after privatisation of its activities?

### Import of rice

†989. SHRI KHAN GHUFRAN ZAHIDI: Will the Minister of CONSUMER AFFAIRS, FOOD AND PUBLIC DISTRIBUTION be pleased to state:

- (a) the stock of rice available in the country;
- (b) whether Government are contemplating to import rice; and
- (c) if so, the reasons therefor and the quantum of rice to be imported?

### Prices of foodgrains

990. PROF. M. SANKARALINGAM: Will the Minister of CONSUMER AFFAIRS, FOOD AND PUBLIC DISTRIBUTION be pleased to state:

- (a) whether it is a fact that prices of foodgrains are high under the PDS and poor are not in a position to afford;
- (b) whether it is also a fact that due to high prices of PDS ration, stocks are overflowing in Government godowns; and
- (c) if so, the details thereof?

### Inspecting and checking up foodgrains before lifting

991. SHRI SUKHDEV SINGH LIBRA:  
DR. ABRAR AHMED:

Will the Minister of CONSUMER AFFAIRS, FOOD AND PUBLIC DISTRIBUTION be pleased to state:

- (a) what is the procedure laid down for inspecting/checking the foodgrains in FCI godowns before lifting from FCI depots for issue under PDS; and
- (b) the steps taken by Government to ensure that only sound stocks, fit for human

consumption, are issued for distribution under PDS?

### Prices of wheat

992. SHRI EKANATH K. THAKUR: Will the Minister of CONSUMER AFFAIRS, FOOD AND PUBLIC DISTRIBUTION be pleased to state:

- (a) whether it is a fact that his Ministry has deliberately ignored higher domestic demand for wheat this year and instead of ensuring more supply, it has attempted to reduce demand by raising prices of wheat;
- (b) whether it is a fact that Government have purchased less amount of wheat *i.e.* less than one million tonne of wheat, as against 3.9 million tonnes of wheat bought last year;
- (c) if so, the reasons therefor; and
- (d) the steps Government propose to take to arrest the spiralling prices of wheat?

### Diversion of Government supply to open market

993. SHRI VIJAY J. DARDA: Will the Minister of CONSUMER AFFAIRS, FOOD AND PUBLIC DISTRIBUTION be pleased to state:

- (a) whether it is a fact that unscrupulous ration dealers deprive the Antodaya Ration Card holders, or similar other economically backward PDS beneficiaries by diverting Government supplies to open market at higher rates;
- (b) if so, whether any specific complaints against the ration dealers and regarding stiff resistance from officials of the Food and Supplies Department have been received from Non-Governmental Organisations; and
- (c) what steps Government are taking to ensure that economically backward,

†Original notice of the question received in Hindi.

tribals and adivasi PDS beneficiaries get the entitlement of rations at fixed Government rates?

(c) what strategy has been evolved and adopted to ensure smooth clearances of cane dues?

#### **Closure of sugar mills in Uttar Pradesh**

†994. PROF. M. M. AGARWAL: Will the Minister of CONSUMER AFFAIRS, FOOD AND PUBLIC DISTRIBUTION be pleased to state:

(a) the number of sugar mills which have already been closed down in Uttar Pradesh alongwith the number of mills which are on the verge of closure;

(b) the outstanding arrears of sugarcane dues to be paid to the growers by both the closed mills as well as those still operating alongwith the reasons for non-payment thereof ; and

(c) the policy adopted by Government in this regard in order to safeguard interests of the farmers?

#### **Arrears of sugarcane dues**

995. DR. AKHILESH DAS: Will the Minister of CONSUMER AFFAIRS, FOOD AND PUBLIC DISTRIBUTION be pleased to state:

(a) whether Government have extended any Central assistance to different States to help clear arrears of sugarcane dues for 2002-03, if so, the aid extended during the last three months and how far the arrears for 2003-04 have been paid off, indicating the arrears, State-wise, as on the 1st April, 2003;

(b) the arrears of cane dues as on the 1st September, 2003, indicating the arrears in Uttar Pradesh, the Central aid sought by the State Government and the arrears still outstanding; and

#### **Review of buffer stock policy**

996. SHRI V. NARAYANASAMY: Will the Minister of CONSUMER AFFAIRS, FOOD AND PUBLIC DISTRIBUTION be pleased to state:

(a) whether it is a fact that his Ministry proposes to review the country's buffer stock policy; and

(b) whether it is also a fact that there is a huge stock of foodgrains and Government have suffered heavy losses on account of the damaged food stocks?

#### **Subsidy on foodgrains**

†997. SHRI RAJIV RANJAN SINGH 'LALAN':  
SHRI LAJPAT RAI:

Will the Minister of CONSUMER AFFAIRS, FOOD AND PUBLIC DISTRIBUTION be pleased to state:

(a) whether it is a fact that Government have to incur a sum to the tune of Rs. 27,000 crore as subsidy on food grains during 2002-03;

(b) if not, the actual amount thereof and whether it is also a fact that this amount also include Rs. 5000 crore reserved for the export of foodgrains; and

(c) if not, the amount thereof and the quantity of rice and wheat sold by the Food Corporation of India for export?

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†Original notice of the question received in Hindi.

**Starvation due to drought and flood**

998. DR. ABRAR AHMED:  
SHRI SUKHDEV SINGH  
LIBRA:

Will the Minister of CONSUMER AFFAIRS, FOOD AND PUBLIC DISTRIBUTION be pleased to state:

(a) whether Government have formulated any strategy in consultation with the State Governments to ensure that starvation deaths are not perpetuated by disasters like drought and floods; and

(b) if so, the details thereof?

**Buffer stock of foodgrains**

999. PROF. ALKA BALRAM  
KSHATRIYA:  
DR. T. SUBBARAMI  
REDDY:

Will the Minister of CONSUMER AFFAIRS, FOOD AND PUBLIC DISTRIBUTION be pleased to state:

(a) the existing buffer stocks of foodgrains with Government;

(b) whether after providing foodgrains to drought-hit States, the food-stocks are sufficient to meet the country's requirements;

(c) if so, whether in view of better monsoon and production of wheat and rice, Government have further decided to release the same to the exporters;

(d) whether fresh arrivals of stocks of foodgrains have reached; and

(e) if so, to what extent the present position of stocks of foodgrains is sufficient to meet the future demands in the country?

**Sugar stocks with mills**

†1000. SHRI LAJPAT RAI:  
SHRI KAPIL SIBAL:

Will the Minister of CONSUMER AFFAIRS, FOOD AND PUBLIC DISTRIBUTION be pleased to state:

(a) whether it is a fact that the sugar mills in the country are showing more sugar stocks as compared to their actual stocks; and

(b) if so, the facts in this regard and the States where more sugar stocks have been shown by the sugar mills alongwith the quantity thereof?

**Restructuring of FACT**

1001. SHRI R. K. ANAND: Will the Minister of DISINVESTMENT be pleased to state:

(a) whether Government have any plan to restructure the Fertilizer and Chemical of Travancore (FACT) in its bid to make its disinvestments a viable proposition;

(b) whether Government have decided to waive the outstanding interest, moratorium on repayment of principal amount on Government loan and reduction in interest rate on other outstanding Government loans; and

(c) if so, the details thereof?

**Disinvestment in Rajasthan**

1002. SHRI GHULAM NABI AZAD:  
SHRI SANTOSH BAGRODIA:

Will the Minister of DISINVESTMENT be pleased to state:

(a) the sectors in Rajasthan which are under consideration for disinvestment;

(b) the details of the public sector companies in the State where disinvestment process has already been initiated;

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†Original notice of the question received in Hindi.

(c) whether Government have overlooked on reviving the sick PSU's in the State either by the Central funding or private participation; and

(d) if not, the details of the reviews thereof?

#### **Apprehension of BALCO workers**

1003. SHRI V. V. RAGHAVAN:  
SHRI N. R. DASARI:

Will the Minister of DISINVESTMENT be pleased to state:

(a) whether Government are aware of the apprehension of the BALCO workers that the Sterlite Group is trying to sell BALCO to a foreign company Twinstar despite a three year lock-in period on sale; and

(b) if so, the details thereof and Government's reaction thereto?

#### **Disinvestment of CCIC, NHDC and NEEPCL**

1004. SHRI N. R. DASARI:  
SHRI V. V. RAGHAVAN:

Will the Minister of DISINVESTMENT be pleased to state:

(a) whether Government are considering a proposal to disinvest the Central Cottage Industries Corporation of India Ltd. (CCIC), National Handloom Development Corporation Ltd. (NHDC) and the North Eastern Electric Power Corporation Ltd. (NEEPCL); and

(b) if so, the details thereof?

#### **Disinvestment policy**

1005. SHRI RAJKUMAR DHOOT:  
Will the Minister of DISINVESTMENT be pleased to state:

(a) whether it is a fact that Government have not finalized their disinvestment policy so far;

(b) if so, the reasons therefor and by when the policy is expected to be announced;

(c) the revised estimates of realization of the income by way of disinvestments during the current fiscal year; and

(d) how the low realization is going to affect the proposed plan of action envisaged in the beginning of the year?

#### **Permanent membership in Security Council**

1006. SHRI B. J. PANDA: Will the Minister of EXTERNAL AFFAIRS be pleased to state:

(a) whether it is a fact that UNO propose to expand the UN Security Council to make it a 15 member body;

(b) whether there is a chance for India to become a permanent member of the Security Council; and

(c) the number of member countries which are supporting India for a permanent seat in the Council?

#### **Terrorist activities of Pakistan**

†1007. SHRI MOTILAL VORA: Will the Minister of EXTERNAL AFFAIRS be pleased to state:

(a) whether Government's attention has been drawn towards the Pak President's statement made on 3rd October, 2003, that an end to terrorist activities cannot be guaranteed;

(b) whether it is a fact that irritated by the continuous killings of terrorists, Pakistan may wage a nuclear war against India any time;

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†Original notice of the question received in Hindi.

(c) if so, whether Government have made adequate preparedness to deal with such an eventuality;

(d) whether Government have drawn the attention of America and other countries of the world towards these activities of Pakistan; and

(e) if so, the outcome thereof?

#### **Talks between India and Canada**

1008. SHRI PARMESHWAR KUMAR AGARWALLA: Will the Minister of EXTERNAL AFFAIRS be pleased to state:

(a) whether it is a fact that recently India and Canada have decided to formalize Ministerial level talks on a yearly basis;

(b) if so, what are the areas of cooperation;

(c) whether Canada has announced any financial grant in the educational and health sector; and

(d) if so, the details thereof?

#### **Foreign direct investment in Iraq**

1009. SHRI RAJKUMAR DHOT: Will the Minister of EXTERNAL AFFAIRS be pleased to state:

(a) whether it is a fact that Iraq is seeking foreign direct investment and/or through joint ventures in food, power and other infrastructure projects;

(b) if so, whether India has responded thereto;

(c) if so, the details thereof; and

(d) if not, the reasons therefor?

#### **Role of UN in Iraq**

1010. SHRI KALRAJ MISHRA: Will the Minister of EXTERNAL AFFAIRS be pleased to state:

(a) whether recently UN General Assembly came out in favour of the United Nations playing a more significant role in Iraq; and

(b) if so, the precise stand taken by India about UN intervention in Iraq and response of the UN General Assembly thereto?

#### **Observer's status to India in OIC**

1011. DR. ALLADI P. RAJKUMAR: Will the Minister of EXTERNAL AFFAIRS be pleased to state:

(a) whether Russia has been accorded the status of an observer at the Organisation of Islamic countries meeting in Malaysia;

(b) whether India is also likely to put forward its claim as observer's status in the meetings; and

(c) if so, the details in this regard?

#### **Holding elections in Afghanistan**

1012. SHRI NANA DESHMUKH: Will the Minister of EXTERNAL AFFAIRS be pleased to state:

(a) whether the Afghan Election Commission has requested the Indian Government for expertise in holding elections;

(b) if so, the details thereof; and

(c) Government's reaction thereto?

**Pak-Saudi Arabia pact on nuclear co-operation**

1013. SHRI AMAR SINGH:  
SHRI PARMESHWAR  
KUMAR AGARWALLA:  
SHRI ABU ASIM AZMI:  
SHRI PREM CHAND GUPTA:  
SHRI RUMANDLA  
RAAMACHANDRAYYA:

Will the Minister of EXTERNAL AFFAIRS be pleased to state:

(a) whether Government are aware of the secret deal concluded by Pakistan and Saudi Arabia on nuclear co-operation that would provide the Saudis with nuclear weapons technology in exchange of cheap oil;

(b) to what extent this is likely to affect India's security and regional balance; and

(c) the steps proposed to be taken by Government in the matter?

**Indo-Bangla relations**

1014. SHRI MATILAL SARKAR:  
Will the Minister of EXTERNAL AFFAIRS be pleased to state:

(a) the points on which the agreements have been arrived at between India and Bangladesh to make the relations from easy to easier;

(b) whether it is a fact that Bharat-Bangladesh Bus services do not give a good experience because of high fare; and

(c) if so, the details thereof and the steps proposed by Government?

**Pakistani efforts to mobilize support on Kashmir**

1015. SHRI K. RAHMAN KHAN:  
Will the Minister of EXTERNAL AFFAIRS be pleased to state:

(a) whether it is a fact that Pakistan has constituted a 26 Member Committee of Parliamentarians to mobilize World opinion in favour of their stand on Kashmir;

(b) if so, what steps have been taken by Government not only to contain evil designs of Pakistan but also garner support for independence of PoK; and

(c) what preparations are under way?

**American support for attack on PoK**

1016. SHRI SANTOSH BAGRODIA:  
SHRI GHULAM NABI  
AZAD:

Will the Minister of EXTERNAL AFFAIRS be pleased to state:

(a) whether it is a fact that the American stand has been very supportive and understanding on the recent attack by Israel on terrorist camps in Syria;

(b) if so, whether Government have made any efforts to gather support from the Americans to attack terrorist training camps in PoK similar to what the Israelis are doing;

(c) if so, the details thereof;

(d) if not, the reasons therefor and the problems faced by Government; and

(e) whether Government's stand on attacking terrorist training camps in PoK has taken a back seat altogether?

**Prime Minister's Turkey visit**

1017. DR. KARAN SINGH: Will the Minister of EXTERNAL AFFAIRS be pleased to state:

(a) whether during the Prime Minister's recent visit to Turkey, India made its stand about sending its troops to Iraq, that no decision in the matter can be taken unless

the UN makes its support or otherwise clear the US move;

(b) if so, whether the Turkish Government also shared the Indian view;

(c) whether the Jammu and Kashmir issue was also discussed with Turkish counterparts and how far the Turkish Government agreed with the Indian stand; and

(d) what other issues were discussed during the Prime Minister's visit?

#### **UN observers in Jammu and Kashmir**

1018. SHRI RUMANDLA RAAMA-CHANDRAYYA: Will the Minister of EXTERNAL AFFAIRS be pleased to state:

(a) whether India barred access to the U.N. Observers group for India and Pakistan in Jammu and Kashmir making clear that India visualized no role for the world body in militancy hit State;

(b) whether India has asked the UN to wind up its Observers group stationed in Jammu and Kashmir; and

(c) if so, the details in this regard?

#### **Indian help to set up a University in Senegal**

1019. DR. ALLADI P. RAJKUMAR: Will the Minister of EXTERNAL AFFAIRS be pleased to state:

(a) whether the Senegal Government has sought India's help to set up a University there; and

(b) if so, the action taken thereon?

#### **US restrictions on export of high technology items**

1020. SHRI RAJKUMAR DHOOT: Will the Minister of EXTERNAL AFFAIRS be pleased to state:

(a) whether it is a fact that USA has not lifted restrictions on export of high technology items to India;

(b) if so, the reasons therefor;

(c) the efforts made by Government to have the restrictions removed at the earliest; and

(d) the present status of negotiations between the two countries in this regard?

#### **Additional Ambassador level official at Indian Embassy in USA**

1021. SHRI RAJEEV SHUKLA: DR. VIJAY MALLYA:

Will the Minister of EXTERNAL AFFAIRS be pleased to state:

(a) whether in addition to the Indian Ambassador in USA, another official of the same rank is operating in USA;

(b) if so, what specific role has been assigned to him particularly in regard to NRIs and Persons of Indian Origin (PIOs) in the USA; and

(c) the details of the action already taken and proposed to be taken by him in this regard?

#### **Denial of contracts to Indian firms**

1022. SHRI NANA DESHMUKH: Will the Minister of EXTERNAL AFFAIRS be pleased to state:

(a) whether it is a fact that Indian firms, though offering lowest bids, are being denied contracts in Mauritius;

- (b) if so, the reasons therefor;
- (c) whether the issue was taken up during the recent visit of Mauritius delegation to India; and
- (d) if so, the outcome thereof?

#### **Recruitment of Nepalese by ISI**

1023. SHRI V. NARAYANASAMY:  
SHRI UDAY PRATAP SINGH:

Will the Minister of EXTERNAL AFFAIRS be pleased to state:

(a) whether Government are aware of the fact that Pakistan's ISI is recruiting Nepalese Youth and made Nepal as well as Bhutan as its launching pad for anti-India activities; and

(b) if so, whether Government have taken up the matter with Nepal?

#### **Indo-Russian cooperation in private sectors**

† 1024. SHRIMATI SAVITA SHARDA: Will the Minister of EXTERNAL AFFAIRS be pleased to state:

(a) whether a decision has been taken between India and Russia regarding co-operation in private sector;

(b) if so, the details thereof;

(c) whether there is any proposal to establish Indo-Russia trade center for the above purpose; and

(d) if so, the details thereof?

#### **Discouraging Muttah Marriage**

1025. SHRI MURLI DEORA: Will the Minister of EXTERNAL AFFAIRS be pleased to state:

(a) whether Government have written

to all embassies in the country to discourage Muttah Marriage on payment;

(b) if so, the details thereof and number of such cases which came to Government's notice;

(c) whether such practice is violative of the Immoral Traffic Act; and

(d) the measures Government propose to take to nip this evil in the bud?

#### **Indo-Russian trade exhibitions**

† 1026. SHRIMATI SAVITA SHARDA: Will the Minister of EXTERNAL AFFAIRS be pleased to state:

(a) whether any proposal regarding participation in trade exhibitions between Russia and India is under consideration;

(b) if so, the details thereof; and

(c) by when a final decision is likely to be taken?

#### **Highway project linking India, Myanmar, Thailand and Vietnam**

1027. SHRI RAJU PARMAR:  
DR. KARAN SINGH:

Will the Minister of EXTERNAL AFFAIRS be pleased to state:

(a) whether there is any Highway Project, linking India, Thailand and Myanmar to provide for a road network in ASEAN;

(b) if so, the details of the project and the contemplated contribution of respective countries to this project; and

(c) the progress made in this direction, so far?

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† Original notice of the question received in Hindi.

### **India's role in South and South East Asia**

1028. SHRI VIJAY J. DARDA: Will the Minister of EXTERNAL AFFAIRS be pleased to state:

(a) with the successful conclusion of the Prime Minister's tour of ASEAN countries and based on the proven experience of growth of economies of these nations through investment by the multinationals, in which areas of economic and technological co-operations, India is taking initiative to strengthen its presence in this region;

(b) whether any concrete proposals have been made and vigorously followed; and

(c) if so, the response from these countries so far?

### **Rail link between New Delhi and Hanoi**

1029. SHRI K. RAMA MOHANA RAO: Will the Minister of EXTERNAL AFFAIRS be pleased to state:

(a) whether there is any proposal of starting Asia-Rail from New Delhi to Hanoi and whether any steps have been taken to conduct a feasibility study;

(b) whether his Ministry has given 'Green signal' to this project; and

(c) if so, the details of the proposal?

### **Indians in Pakistani jails**

1030. DR. KARAN SINGH:  
SHRI ABU ASIM AZMI:

Will the Minister of EXTERNAL AFFAIRS be pleased to state:

(a) the number of Indian fishermen,

civilians and defence personnel in Pakistani jails, as on September, 1, 2003; and how many of them have been in jails there for over five years;

(b) whether Government have any reports about their condition in Pak jails and if so, the details thereof;

(c) the number of Pakistanis in Indian jails and how many of them have already outlived their terms; and

(d) the steps taken or being taken for ending their incarceration?

### **Prince Charles's visit to India**

†1031. SHRI KHAN GHUFRAN ZAHIDI: Will the Minister of EXTERNAL AFFAIRS be pleased to state:

(a) the details of the Prince Charles's visit to India;

(b) whether any political or trade agreements have been entered into between both the countries during the visit; and

(c) if so, the details thereof?

### **Agreements with South Africa**

†1032. SHRI UDAY PRATAP SINGH: Will the Minister of EXTERNAL AFFAIRS be pleased to state:

(a) the details of the different agreements signed between India and South Africa during the recent visit of the South African President to India;

(b) whether any deliberations to enhance economic co-operation between the two countries have also taken place; and

(c) if so, the details thereof?

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†Original notice of the question received in Hindi.

**Omission of India's name from list of victims of terrorism**

1033. PROF. M. SANKARA-LINGAM:  
DR. AKHILESH DAS:

Will the Minister of EXTERNAL AFFAIRS be pleased to state:

(a) whether Government have taken note of the fact that the US President in his address to the recent UN General Assembly Session (2003) omitted India's name while recounting the names of the countries which were victims of terrorism, such as Jakarta, Bali, Casablanca and Riyadh;

(b) what steps have since been taken to bring home to the US and other UN members the conspicuous omission made by the US President; and

(c) the US response thereto?

**Release of prisoners by India and Pakistan**

1034. SHRIMATI KAMLA MANHAR: Will the Minister of EXTERNAL AFFAIRS be pleased to state:

(a) the number of prisoners released by India and Pakistan during the last one year;

(b) the number of Indian and Pakistani prisoners in respective jails as per the information available with Government;

(c) whether any councillor services are being provided to the prisoners and if not, the reasons therefor;

(d) the number of Pakistani prisoners facing trial in various courts of the country and whether any special courts have been set-up for speedy trials; and

(e) if not, the reasons therefor?

**Indian Missions and consulates abroad**

1035. SHRI ABU ASIM AZMI: Will the Minister of EXTERNAL AFFAIRS be pleased to state:

(a) the number of Indian diplomatic Missions and consular posts in foreign countries as on the 1st April, 2003;

(b) the number of Missions which consists of the head of mission supported by one attache with diplomatic status and a few non-diplomatic staff with their place of location;

(c) the names of the countries where India has resident mission but which do not maintain resident mission in India and *vice-versa*;

(d) whether the expenditure commission has recommended closures of some of the resident missions and their substitution, if necessary, by concurrent accreditation; and

(e) if so, the name of countries and location of such missions and Government's decision in this regard?

**Inter-continental railway network**

1036. SHRI LALIT SURI : Will the Minister of EXTERNAL AFFAIRS be pleased to refer to the answer to Starred question 263 given in the Rajya Sabha on the 7th August, 2003 and state:

(a) whether it is a fact that the Prime Minister during his visit to Turkey and other European countries in September last made suggestion for having inter-continental railway networks connecting southern China to London;

(b) if so, the names of the countries which have shown interest in the venture and whether any concrete shape has been given to the proposal; and

(c) if so, the details in this regard?

### **Sino-Indian relations**

1037. SHRI DINA NATH MISHRA: Will the Minister of EXTERNAL AFFAIRS be pleased to state:

(a) how far Sino-Indian relations have improved after Prime Minister's visit to China few months back;

(b) whether bi-lateral trade between the two countries has considerably increased after this visit;

(c) if so, the details thereof;

(d) whether the balance of trade is favourable to India; and

(e) if so, the value thereof?

### **Indo-China Joint Study Group on economic cooperation**

1038. SHRI R.K. ANAND: Will the Minister of EXTERNAL AFFAIRS be pleased to state:

(a) whether India and China have agreed to expedite the establishment of the Joint Study Group on economic cooperation;

(b) if so, Government's strategy to implement the agreement; and

(c) the details thereof?

### **Meeting of a Minister with Israeli Prime Minister**

1039. SHRI K. CHANDRAN PILLAI: Will the Minister of EXTERNAL AFFAIRS be pleased to state:

(a) whether it is a fact that the Fisheries Minister of Kerala had a meeting with the Israeli Prime Minister while he was on a visit to the country;

(b) if so, whether necessary permission from competent authorities were sought by the Minister for the meeting;

(c) if so, the details thereof;

(d) whether Government find any breach of protocol in the conduct of the Minister; and

(e) the details thereof?

### **Indo-Russian joint working group**

1040. SHRI RAVULA CHANDRA SEKAR REDDY: Will the Minister of EXTERNAL AFFAIRS be pleased to state:

(a) whether India and Russia held Ist Joint working group meet on global challenges at New Delhi recently;

(b) if so, the points discussed; and

(c) by when would the next meeting take place?

### **Invitation to India from OIC**

1041. SHRI ABU ASIM AZMI: Will the Minister of EXTERNAL AFFAIRS be pleased to state:

(a) whether Government have taken note of Communique of the OIC Summit in October, 2003 and of the fact that several non-member States were invited to participate in the event;

(b) whether India with the second biggest Muslim Community in the World was also invited;

(c) if so, the reasons for not accepting the invitation; and

(d) if not, whether it was a deliberate omission or it was engineered by hostile States which are members of the OIC?

**Sexual harassment of women workers**

1042. SHRI SANTOSH BAGRODIA:  
SHRI GHULAM NABI  
AZAD:

Will the Minister of LABOUR be pleased to state:

(a) whether many women workers in the country face sexual harassment to some extent at their place of work;

(b) if so, the number of cases reported in this regard during the last three years;

(c) what steps Government propose to take to ensure their safety at their place of work; and

(d) what penalties Government propose to introduce if cases of sexual harassment are reported from the Central Government Offices?

**Revamping of EPF**

1043. SHRI PARMESHWAR KUMAR AGARWALLA: Will the Minister of LABOUR be pleased to state:

(a) whether it is a fact that Government have taken up a project of revamping the Employees Provident Fund;

(b) if so, the details thereof; and

(c) by when the revamping is likely to be completed?

**Provident Fund contribution by private sector employees**

1044. SHRI RUMANDLA RAAMACHANDRAYYA: Will the Minister of LABOUR be pleased to state:

(a) the number of employees in private sector who are making contribution to the Employees Provident Fund as on March 31, 2003;

(b) the arrears that the employers have to pay towards E.P.F.;

(c) the steps being taken by Government to ensure that arrears are cleared during the next three years; and

(d) the steps proposed against the defaulters?

**EPF arrears**

1045. SHRI MURLI DEORA: Will the Minister of LABOUR be pleased to state:

(a) the arrears of EPF at present, State-wise;

(b) the number of companies involved, State-wise;

(c) whether Government are contemplating to privatise EPF and Pension Fund and if so, the details thereof;

(d) whether any rules have been framed in this regard and workers have agreed to; and

(e) if not, the safeguards provided for safety of the funds?

**Educated unemployed youth**

1046. SHRI SK. KHABIR UDDIN AHMED: Will the Minister of LABOUR be pleased to state:

(a) whether Government are aware of a large number of educated unemployed youth in the country particularly in Kerala;

(b) if so, the details of the unemployed registered in employment exchange, State-wise; and

(c) the details of the steps taken by Government to tackle the problem of unemployment?

**By-passing of labour laws by economic reforms**

1047. SHRI B.J. PANDA: Will the Minister of LABOUR be pleased to state:

(a) whether it is a fact that ILO has remarked that economic reforms have by passed labour laws and practices;

(b) whether the world agency feels that the legislative initiatives are slow and inadequate to promote harmonious labour-management relations; and

(c) if so, what other inadequacies were noticed by the world agency in the system and Government's action plan to make up deficiencies in the field?

**Unemployed persons**

1048. SHRI JIBON ROY: Will the Minister of LABOUR be pleased to state:

(a) the number of unemployed persons registered with the employment exchanges, as on the 30th June, 2003;

(b) the number of persons opted for VRS during the years 1998—2003; and

(c) the number of establishments closed perpetually during the above period?

**Unemployed engineers and diploma holders**

1049. SHRI SATISH PRADHAN: Will the Minister of LABOUR be pleased to state:

(a) whether Government are aware that the number of engineers and diploma holders are growing day by day and now searching jobs in various fields;

(b) if so, Government's response thereto;

(c) whether Government are considering any proposal to issue Government's various

departmental small contracts/proposals to the unemployed engineers/diploma holders so that these youth can start their own business and get enough experience; and

(d) if not, the reasons therefor?

**Benefits to unorganised workers**

1050. SHRI PARMESHWAR KUMAR AGARWALLA: Will the Minister of LABOUR be pleased to state:

(a) whether it is a fact that Government propose to give benefits to the workers of the unorganised sector at par with the organised sector;

(b) if so, the details thereof;

(c) whether any additional infrastructure is to be created for the purpose; and

(d) if so, the details thereof?

**Bonded children**

1051. SHRI SK. KHABIR UDDIN AHMED: Will the Minister of LABOUR be pleased to state:

(a) whether Government are aware of the fact that a number of cases of bonded children have been lodged in the country; and

(b) if so, the details thereof, State-wise?

**Legislation for unorganised sector workers**

1052. SHRI RAMACHANDRA KHUNTIA: Will the Minister of LABOUR be pleased to state:

(a) whether Government are bringing a comprehensive legislation to cover workers of all the unorganised sectors under the Social Security Scheme to ensure employment guarantee and to determine the service conditions as it is already delayed; and

(b) by when Government are bringing this legislation?

is engaged and the number of workers engaged in each industry?

#### **Registration in employment exchanges**

† 1053. SHRIMATI KUM KUM RAI: Will the Minister of LABOUR be pleased to state:

(a) whether Government are aware of the fact that the unemployed youths are not getting jobs even after expiry of five years of their registration in the employment exchanges;

(b) if so, the reasons therefor;

(c) whether Government have any scheme under which the youths can get employment within a stipulated period after getting registered with the employment exchanges;

(d) if so, the details thereof; and

(e) if not, the reasons therefor?

#### **Employment opportunities in unorganized sector**

† 1054. SHRI RAJIV RANJAN SINGH 'LALAN':  
SHRI LAJPAT RAI:

Will the Minister of LABOUR be pleased to state:

(a) whether it is a fact that maximum employment opportunities are being generated in the unorganized sector in the country;

(b) if not, Government's estimates in this regard;

(c) whether it is also a fact that 8 per cent of the total labour force is working in the organized sector and the rest 92 per cent working in the unorganized sector; and

(d) if so, the industries in the unorganized sector when 92 per cent labour

#### **Unorganised Sector Workers Bill**

1055. SHRI K. RAMA MOHANA RAO:  
SHRI B.J. PANDA:  
SHRI PRASANTA CHATTERJEE:

Will the Minister of LABOUR be pleased to state:

(a) whether the Unorganized Sector Workers Bill has been approved by the cabinet;

(b) the salient features of the proposed legislation; and

(c) the manner in which the Bill helps in bringing labour reforms in the country?

#### **Skilled professional capability**

† 1056. SHRI KAPIL SIBAL:  
SHRI RAJIV RANJAN SINGH 'LALAN':

Will the Minister of LABOUR be pleased to state:

(a) whether it is a fact that only 5 per cent youths under the age group of 20-24 years have capability of professional skill ;

(b) if not, Government's assessment in this regard;

(c) whether it is also a fact that Government have assessed requirement of the skilled professional capability in the country; and

(d) if so, the details thereof?

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† Original notice of the question received in Hindi.

**Employment generation in organized manufacturing sector**

1057. SHRI K. CHANDRAN PILLAI: Will the Minister of LABOUR be pleased to state:

(a) whether it is a fact that the employment growth rate in the organized manufacturing sector is showing a negative trend since 1991;

(b) if so, the details of the employment generation in the organised manufacturing sector during the period 1991-2001, year-wise; and

(c) the details of the employment generation in the organized manufacturing sector during the years 1980-90?

**New wage board for journalists**

1058. SHRI HARISH RAWAT: Will the Minister of LABOUR be pleased to state:

(a) whether there is any proposal under Government's consideration to set up a new wage board for the employees of newspapers across the country; and

(b) if so, the details thereof and by when a decision would be taken in this regard?

**Over working of labourers in I.T./ Bio-technology sectors**

1059. SHRI M.V. RAJASEKHARAN: Will the Minister of LABOUR be pleased to state:

(a) whether it is a fact that the labour employed in the Information Technology/Bio-technology sectors are over worked;

(b) if so, the details thereof;

(c) whether it is also a fact that there are no requirements and timings for the employees working therein; and

(d) if so, whether Government would issue necessary directions stipulating working conditions for labourers working in Information Technology/Bio-Technology sectors?

**Exemption to Karnataka Handloom Development Corporation from EPF/PF Act**

1060. SHRI JANARDHANA POOJARY: Will the Minister of LABOUR be pleased to state:

(a) whether the State Government of Karnataka has requested the Centre to exempt Karnataka Handloom Development Corporation from the purview of EPF and PF Act, 1952, since the handloom weavers have been covered under the Contributory Thrift Fund Scheme, 1981, where the weavers get the same benefits, except pension; and

(b) if so, the details thereof and Centre's reaction thereto?

**Task Force on employment opportunities**

1061. SHRI NANDI YELLAIAH: Will the PRIME MINISTER be pleased to state:

(a) the salient features of the report of the Task Force on the employment opportunities setup by the Planning Commission including the macro-economic and sectorial policies suggested by the Task Force to facilitate employment generation in the country;

(b) the details of the recommendations as made by the Task Force and the recommendations as accepted by Government; and

(c) by when the recommendations as accepted by Government are likely to be implemented?

### **Funds for NER**

1062. SHRI DWIJENDRA NATH SHARMAH: Will the PRIME MINISTER be pleased to state:

(a) the details of the funds allotted to Assam and other States of NER for development of rural, hilly, backward and adivasi areas during the last three years;

(b) whether Government have increased the annual plan outlay of NER for the year 2002-03 as compared to the previous year;

(c) if so, the details thereof; and

(d) if not, the reasons therefor?

### **Development of border areas in Jammu and Kashmir**

1063. SHRI T.S. BAJWA: Will the PRIME MINISTER be pleased to state:

(a) whether Government have given any aid to develop border areas in Jammu and Kashmir during the last three years;

(b) if so, the details of the amount given as aid; and

(c) whether the amount given so was used for the purpose for which it was given?

### **Rashtriya Sam Vikas Yojana**

1064. SHRI K. RAMA MOHANA RAO:

DR. ALLADI P. RAJKUMAR: Will the PRIME MINISTER be pleased to state:

(a) the number of districts identified for Rashtriya Sam Vikas Yojana;

(b) the districts identified for first phase of development; and

(c) by when all the undeveloped districts would be covered under the programme?

### **Persons below poverty line**

† 1065. DR. PRABHA THAKUR: Will the PRIME MINISTER be pleased to state:

(a) the yard-stick to assess a person or family living below the poverty line;

(b) whether such an assessment is made every year;

(c) whether the number of persons living below the poverty line is increasing or decreasing annually; and

(d) the details thereof?

### **National Human Development Report**

1066. SHRI R.S. GAVAI: Will the PRIME MINISTER be pleased to state:

(a) whether Government have examined the Planning Commission's National Human Development Report, 2002;

(b) if so, the details thereof; and

(c) the steps proposed to be taken to address the developmental activities in the different States or equal development in the country?

### **Role of NGOs in executing project**

1067. SHRI PREM CHAND GUPTA: Will the PRIME MINISTER be pleased to state:

(a) whether it is a fact that continued failure of the State agencies in spending allocations and involving people in implementation of welfare programmes, his Ministry now scripted a large role for Non-Governmental organisations in executing the development projects thus enabling

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† Original notice of the question received in Hindi.

them to act as watchdog of Government institutions; and

(b) if so, what are the details in this regard?

**BPL population in Madhya Pradesh**

1068. SHRI P.K. MAHESHWARI: Will the PRIME MINISTER be pleased to state:

(a) whether it is a fact that population living Below Poverty Line is increasing very fast in Madhya Pradesh;

(b) what steps are being taken by Government to reduce the BPL population, district- wise; and

(c) if no steps have been taken so far, the reasons therefor?

**Special category status for Orissa**

1069. SHRI RAMACHANDRA KHUNTIA: Will the PRIME MINISTER be pleased to state:

(a) whether the State Government and all political parties have been demanding to declare Orissa as a special category State;

(b) whether the Hon'ble Prime Minister while visiting Orissa, assured the Chief Minister of the State to consider the demand; and

(c) whether the highest percentage of people are living Below Poverty Line in the State and the State Government's financial position is considered very alarming, as a result of which the State Government is not able to spend the Central assistance including the assistance as relief?

**Pilot Project of National Commission on Population**

1070. SHRI RAMA MUNI REDDY SIRIGIREDDY:  
SHRI K. RAMA MOHANA  
RAO:

Will the PRIME MINISTER be pleased to state:

(a) whether it is a fact that the National Commission on Population is launching pilot projects to provide maternal, child health and contraception services through public/private partnership in high growth areas;

(b) if so, the details of the districts in which these projects are going to be launched in various States, State-wise;

(c) whether it is also a fact that the aim of this project is to monitor each pregnancy in the villages till the birth of the child and to provide basic maternal, child health and contraception services to the family; and

(d) if so, the details thereof ?

**Incentives for investment in industrial sector**

1071. DR. ARUN KUMAR SARMA: Will the PRIME MINISTER be pleased to state:

(a) the areas of the country granted special incentive towards attracting investment in the industrial sector showing location-wise details of the incentive granted by Government, its duration and conditionalities put; and

(b) the special packages declared from PMO in favour of these areas?

**Damage of roads due to overladen vehicles**

1072. SHRIMATI BIMBA RAIKAR: Will the Minister of ROAD TRANSPORT AND HIGHWAYS be pleased to state:

(a) whether overloading of commercial vehicles causes premature wear and tear to the road surface, apart from causing accidents;

(b) whether the Centre have prevailed upon the State to enforce the laws stringently and penalize carriers found to be overladen; and

(c) whether Government would consider withdrawal of the discretionary powers vested with the States to legalise overloading of commercial vehicles?

**Road projects in Rajasthan**

1073. SHRI GHULAM NABI AZAD:  
SHRI SANTOSH BAGRODIA:

Will the Minister of ROAD TRANSPORT AND HIGHWAYS be pleased to state:

(a) the details of the projects of road widening, maintenance, beautification, etc. that were approved by the Centre and the number of the projects completed during the year 2002-03 in Rajasthan;

(b) the funds allocated to the State Government for the same;

(c) the funds transferred to the State so far and the funds utilized till date; and

(d) the number of projects that are still pending?

**Development of highways in Himachal Pradesh**

†1074. SHRI ANIL SHARMA: Will the Minister of ROAD TRANSPORT AND HIGHWAYS be pleased to state:

(a) whether Government have any proposal to develop the State highways of Himachal Pradesh as National Highways on the lines of North-Eastern States;

(b) the highways which are proposed to be developed as National Highways during the financial year 2004-05; and

(c) the amount Government propose to sanction during the Tenth Five Year Plan?

**Financial assistance for National Highways in Rajasthan**

†1075. DR. PRABHA THAKUR: Will the Minister of ROAD TRANSPORT AND HIGHWAYS be pleased to state:

(a) whether Government have allocated any additional financial assistance for construction and maintenance of the National Highways in Rajasthan;

(b) if so, the details thereof; and

(c) whether any list of works has been made with regard to the National Highways in the States?

**Connecting major ports with National Highways**

1076. DR. DASARI NARAYANA RAO: Will the Minister of ROAD TRANSPORT AND HIGHWAYS be pleased to state:

(a) whether adequate road connectivity to major ports in the country through four lane National Highways and other roads has been developed or proposed to be developed;

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†Original notice of the question received in Hindi.

- (b) if so, the details thereof; and  
 (c) what is the present status thereof, port-wise?
- (c) the amount spent on such roads by the Road Authority of India upto 31st December, 2002?

#### **Utilization of funds released from fuel cess**

1077. SHRI R.P. GOENKA: Will the Minister of ROAD TRANSPORT AND HIGHWAYS be pleased to state:

(a) whether it is a fact that the pace of utilization of funds released by the Centre from the fuel cess inflows for the road upgradation projects has been slow in some States and clearance to some of their fresh proposals has been held up for want of utilization certificates for their previous disbursements;

(b) if so, the details of the funds released and their utilization during the last two quarters by the different States; and

(c) the fresh initiatives taken to speed up the road upgradation projects in various States and for fuller utilization of the available resources?

#### **Renovation of National Highways**

1078. SHRI BACHANI LEKHRAJ: Will the Minister of ROAD TRANSPORT AND HIGHWAYS be pleased to state:

(a) whether work of renovating the National Highways is going according to the schedule;

(b) whether the State Governments are demanding to extend some State Roads for joining with the National Highways in Golden Corridor, or four lane road; and

#### **National Highways in Uttar Pradesh**

†1079. DR. AKHTAR HASAN RIZVI: Will the Minister of ROAD TRANSPORT AND HIGHWAYS be pleased to state:

(a) the number of the National Highways passing through Uttar Pradesh;

(b) the number of districts connected with these National Highways;

(c) whether Government propose to connect rest of the districts of the State with these National Highways; and

(d) if so, the details thereof?

#### **Road proposals from Gujarat**

1080. SHRI BACHANI LEKHRAJ: Will the Minister of ROAD TRANSPORT AND HIGHWAYS be pleased to state:

(a) whether the State Government of Gujarat has submitted any proposal for declaring any New National Highways in the State;

(b) whether it is a fact that despite declaration of certain roads in the State as National Highways the additional grant commensurating with the increase in length has not yet been allotted to the State Government; and

(c) if so, the reasons therefor?

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†Original notice of the question received in Hindi.

### **Delay in completion of road projects**

1081. SHRI K. KALAVENKATA  
RAO:  
SHRI C. RAMACHAN-  
DRAIAH:

Will the Minister of ROAD TRANSPORT AND HIGHWAYS be pleased to state:

(a) whether it is a fact that according to the 215th Flash Report of the Ministry of Statistics and Programme Implementation for September, 2003 about 94 road and transport projects have reported additional delays over the completion dates;

(b) if so, the details of the projects and their range of delays;

(c) the reasons for the delay;

(d) the project-wise cost escalation due to delay; and

(e) the steps being taken to complete the projects on time?

### **Linking of sixteen capitals with roads**

†1082. SHRI LAJPAT RAI:  
SHRI KAPIL SIBAL:

Will the Minister of ROAD TRANSPORT AND HIGHWAYS be pleased to state:

(a) whether it is a fact that a 2,768 km. long road construction project is under consideration with a view to linking the sixteen capitals of various States;

(b) if so, the facts thereof and the State capitals identified for the purpose; and

(c) the expenditure likely to be incurred thereon?

### **Revival package for SSIs**

1083. MISS MABEL REBELLO:  
SHRI B.J. PANDA:

Will the Minister of SMALL SCALE INDUSTRIES be pleased to state:

(a) whether it is a fact that Small Scale Industries sector has requested the Centre to reduce the rate of interest and chalk out a revival package for the sector;

(b) whether the sector, which provides the largest employment after agriculture, has not been given attention by Government; and

(c) if so, the assistance proposed to be extended to this sector to redress their grievances, State-wise?

### **Problems of SSIs**

1084. DR. VIJAY MALLYA:  
SHRI RAJEEV SHUKLA:

Will the Minister of SMALL SCALE INDUSTRIES be pleased to state:

(a) whether it is a fact that a Member of Planning Commission studied the problems faced by the Small Scale Industrial Sector;

(b) if so, what are the recommendations and what is Government's approach towards these recommendations; and

(c) whether Government are ready to implement the recommendations, in order to address the problems of the Small Scale Industries?

### **Hardships of Small Scale Industries**

1085. DR. VIJAY MALLYA:  
SHRI RAJEEV SHUKLA:

Will the Minister of SMALL SCALE INDUSTRIES be pleased to state:

(a) whether Government are aware of

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†Original notice of the question received in Hindi.

the various hardships being faced by the Small Scale Industrial Sector;

(b) if so, what action Government are taking in this regard;

(c) what is the status of proposed Small Enterprises Development Bill, 2003; and

(d) whether Government would give an assurance that necessary steps would be taken urgently, including the tabling of the Small Enterprises Development Bill, 2003 without delay in order to address the hardships faced by the small scale sector?

#### **Small Business Development Bill**

1086. SHRI RAVULA CHANDRA SEKAR REDDY: Will the Minister of SMALL SCALE INDUSTRIES be pleased to state:

(a) whether Government propose to introduce the Small Business Development Bill;

(b) if so, the salient features thereof; and

(c) the measures taken to bring down the interest rates on loans to SSI by the Nationalised Banks?

#### **Difficulties faced by the SSIs**

1087. PROF. M.M. AGARWAL: Will the Minister of SMALL SCALE INDUSTRIES be pleased to state:

(a) whether the Small Scale Industries are facing difficulties in comparison to the multinational companies under liberalisation policy;

(b) if so, the details thereof;

(c) whether Government have received any memoranda to redress their grievances from some associations; and

(d) if so, the action taken or proposed to be taken by Government in this regard?

#### **Separate law for SSI sector**

1088. DR. T. SUBBARAMI REDDY : Will the Minister of SMALL SCALE INDUSTRIES be pleased to state:

(a) whether Government have decided to formulate a separate law for the small scale industries sector;

(b) if so, whether he has held a meeting with the Finance Minister and head of various commercial banks to discuss the issue of extending credit facilities to SSI sector;

(c) whether drop in interest rates over the last few years has applied a squeeze on the spread of the Indian banking sector;

(d) if so, whether the Finance Minister has urged the banks to give maximum aid to small sector; and

(e) if so, by when a final decision in this regard is likely to be taken?

#### **Sick SSIs**

† 1089. SHRI RAJIV RANJAN SINGH 'LALAN':  
SHRI KAPIL SIBAL:

Will the Minister of SMALL SCALE INDUSTRIES be pleased to state:

(a) whether it is a fact that 36,227 small scale industrial units have fallen sick by the end of the year 2003;

(b) if not, the actual figures thereof and the quantum of capital invested therein; and

(c) the percentage of the sick units out of the SSI unit registered during 2002-03?

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†Original notice of the question received in Hindi.

**Building of satellite vehicle**

1090. MISS MABEL REBELLO : Will the PRIME MINISTER be pleased to state:

(a) whether it is a fact that ISRO has been approached by other countries in building satellite vehicles, if so, the details of those countries and the kind of help asked for, by them; and

(b) whether it is also a fact that ISRO proposes to double its transponder capacity in a phased manner to meet the growing demand, if so, the details of the project?

NEW DELHI;  
*The 5th December, 2003*  
 Agrahayana 14, 1925 (Saka)

**Remote Sensing Satellites**

1091. SHRI B.J. PANDA: Will the PRIME MINISTER be pleased to state:

(a) whether it is a fact that India leads among data providers and ISRO is all set to become a leader among other countries providing data using Remote Sensing Satellites;

(b) the areas where the data is made use of; and

(c) the world market gained, so far, and the foreign exchange earned during the year 2002-03?

YOGENDRA NARAIN,  
*Secretary-General.*

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